

CLAIMS

1 A method of sensory control of a lift car located in an lift shaft which serves to define a number of separate stations between which the car can be driven and at each of which stations the car can be caused to stop to enable a person or an article to enter or leave the car characterised by the steps of:

providing for the car a scanning device;

providing at each of at least two or more of the stations an independent scanning extension means;

providing that on, or following, the arrival of the car at one of the stations equipped with an scanning extension means the scanning device and the scanning extension means at the station are juxtaposed, or otherwise linked, to form an operable combination;

scanning by means of the operable combination a predetermined region associated with the shaft at the station so as to provide as an output a signal representing a state of the predetermined region, such as whether it is occupied or not, and

using the signal or a function thereof, in the event the signal or a function thereof represents a predetermined condition, to regulate subsequent operation of the lift car.

2 A method of sensory control as claimed in Claim 1 wherein the scanning step is undertaken by way of a scanning device embodied as a camera and a scanning means incorporating a refractive or a reflective component to provide for a view of the predetermined area to be conveyed by way of the scanning means to the scanning device.

3 A lift system wherein an lift car is located in a lift shaft which serves to define a number of separate stations at each of which the car can be caused to stop to enable a person to enter or leave the car characterised by the provision of a scanning device supported on, or by, the car, and a scanning extension means which, at least when the car is stopped at a given station, is juxtaposed or otherwise linked to the scanning device to provide a combination unit directed to a predetermined region relative to the

given station whereby the scanning device is adapted to provide on an output channel of a signal representing a state of the predetermined region.

4 A lift system according to a first preferred version of the second aspect of the present invention as claimed in Claim 3 wherein the scanning device is a camera and the scanning extension means incorporates a refractive or a reflective component whereby a view of the pre-determined area is conveyed by way of the scanning means to the scanning device.

5 A sensor system for a lift system as claimed in Claim 3 or Claim 4 comprising a plurality of portals through which signals can enter the sensor environment, multiplexed into a single signal processing system so that the movement of the lift forms a mechanically multiplexed switch whereby connection and continuity of each signal path is determined by the position of the lift car within the lift shaft and at any landing the sensor environment is uniquely connected to the signal portal by mechanical alignment and signal continuity achieved by radiated or conducted means.

6 A lift system as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.